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*A COMMUNICATION FROM THE MONROE INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCES*

**THREE CASE STUDIES**

*Stuart Twemlow*

The following is a portion of a report from one Institute research associate, Psychiatrist Stuart Twemlow:

"In our studies of the effect of the Monroe Tape system on brain waves, we have found that the tapes encourage the focusing of brain energy (it can be measured as with a light bulb, in watts) into a narrower and narrower "frequency band". This focusing of energy is not unlike the yoga concept of one pointedness, which we may translate in Western terms as single-mindedness. As Focus 10 counts down, there is a gradual increase in brain-wave size, which is a measure of brain energy or power.

"Although the significance of this is not clear, it could be speculated that the tape system encourages the recruitment of neurons in the brain to focus their attention on a single task, whether that be to reduce tension on the muscles, to improve sleeping, or control pain.

"I'll describe three situations where we have applied the Monroe tapes with unusually striking results. The types of patients with whom the tapes have been tried, generally speaking, have been chronic that is, have had their problem for long periods of time.

"One such case was a middle-aged lady who had severe pain resulting from problems in the healing of an old fracture. In combining the tapes with a structured hospital milieu, we determined that as she began to relax the parts of her body which had not been relaxed, were those pains connected with psychological problems for which the pain was serving the function of "secondary gains". That is, the pain appeared to help her cope with some of the psychological stresses in her everyday life in a sense was kept going because it sensed this adaptive function.

"As we were able to deal with this, she began to feel in control of her life and her need to keep the pain decreased. After discharge from the hospital, this patient has continued to be almost unrecognizable physically. She looks a great deal younger than she did before, she has her pain under control and does not need any physical support for it. Most strikingly, other parts of her life from which she had been very withdrawn, have now become a source of gratification to her.

"The next case concerns a middle-aged man with a very long history of psychosomatic problems affecting practically every organ in his body. A psychological investigation found

many of these symptoms related to some severe surgical trauma which occurred when he was a young child. In this case we combined the tape exercises, especially the Focus 10 exercise with the sorts of stimuli in his environment that would make him very anxious, that is, the stimuli that reminded him of the surgical trauma as a child. Over a period of weeks we exposed him both to the Focus 10 deeply relaxed state and to the stimuli that would make him very anxious and upset. Gradually he became desensitized to the stimuli and was able to feel a lot more in control of his life.

“...Dying man utilized the tape system. He also had severe pain which had been impossible to control with massive doses of narcotic. Over a period of weeks, he also achieved control. Since he died, we’ve had a communication from his wife. She stated that he played the tapes until he died and the last week of his life, was completely pain free and at peace.

“Our feeling was that both the experience with achieving control of the part of his body that was painful and preparing himself for death of his physical body made him less frightened and panicky. The control and preparation made him, therefore, more able to make peace with the family—so important in dying people. In fact, as we have noticed with a number of people who are dying, he was able to give support to those around him who will suffer the loss. Coming to terms with the loss of his own physical body enabled him to integrate the remaining fears he had in this direction.

“Use of the tapes in a clinical setting has pointed out that their effect on reduction of stress and tense muscles is startling. As a matter of fact, it appears that not only muscles under voluntary control but also those under involuntary control (smooth muscles, such as the muscles of the bladder) may be relaxed with the Focus 10 exercise.

“Patients who are chronic feel very much out of control of the various symptoms they have. As with a number of the newer therapeutic techniques, giving them a sense of control has a “snowball” effect on the control of other symptoms and aspects of their interpersonal relationships. As they begin to achieve in other areas resulting from this “snowball” effect, each small success has a reinforcing effect.

“It seems that Focus 10 is the basic state which is essential to master before being able to proceed. Some of our patients have learned to induce the Focus 10 state to relax their bodies while they are actively engaged in work, and certainly to relax their bodies in between some highly stressful day-to-day working situations. Some patients are now able to program their sleep, so that they wake at certain times. A number of them with insomnia have found themselves sleeping very restfully.

“One patient had noticed that a very few minutes of sleep in Focus 10 seemed equivalent to him, in terms of restfulness, to many hours of sleep with his normal sleeping pattern. Sometimes problems can be created by this. For example, one patient noted that he has had

periods of very high energy in which he finds that he is creative, but which represent a change in his ordinary level of functioning to which other people take some time to adjust. He has noticed, for example, that he needs fewer hours of sleep at night and this is ready to start the day's work a great deal earlier than most other people .

“A number of patients who have regularly practiced with the tapes have found that they've become much more reflective, less physically active, and more satisfied with quieter sorts of hobbies and day-to-day activities. Becoming more inwardly turned is a characteristic of people who learn to utilize sources of gratification within their own heads rather than having to constantly turn to the outside world for gratification.”

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